

his audience who were attentive and sympathetic.

At all events that play made such an impression upon John Dunbar, that when he got home he called together out in the woods all the family except "mother."

"I've got an idea, or rather a play I saw has given me an idea," he said.

"I want to tell you all what it is, and then as the true and loving children you are I want you to help me in a plot to—to—well, to reform mother."

"As if mother with her suspicious ways won't scent out the deepest scheme you could devise, father!" submitted the eldest boy, Ronald.

"She can't—no trouble if she does. The plan is a harmless one. Home has grown to be a gloomy, solemn prison. Let's unite and make it just the reverse."

"How, father?" inquired sixteen-year-old Blanche.

"Smile. If mother is cross, don't get grumpy. If she's out of sorts, don't cater to it. Just smile-smile-smile. I want you all to help me make of the rather uncomfortable old homestead a 'house of smiles, see?—good name, eh: 'The House of Smiles!'"

There was a certain fairly mischievous spirit of delight injected into the situation. When Mrs. Dunbar that evening began her usual "I'm dead worn out with this ceaseless housework!" her husband beamed upon her expansively, with the comforting observation. "That's because you insist on doing it better than anybody else in the town!"

If shrewd Mrs. Dunbar suspected the obvious change in the genial mood of the family, she was disarmed, helpless to resist it. She might have met sulkiness, disobedience, defiance, but a smile, ever present and inoffensive and innocent, puzzled and silenced her. It seemed to indicate that her perverse autocratic system, now accepted pleasantly as a willing cross, was losing its power to disturb,

Mary began to realize that there was such a thing as a woman having too much of her own way.

Then, although she never relaxed that grim temper of hers outwardly and never admitted it, she took a secret, silent delight in basking in the loveliness and inspiring cheer of the hours spent around the evening lamp, where the family circle was encompassed in cheery laughter, bright repartee and—smiles!

Then a climax came—two of them—that shook the supposed domestic infallibility of the self-willed mistress of the household.

"The house has been burglarized!" was the direful announcement of John one night when they returned from a church sociable.

Yes, and four hundred dollars in cash missing from a secret hiding place where Mary had insisted on keeping it, instead of placing it in the bank!

It was all her fault and she looked pretty glum. But no one blamed her. John only touched her affectionately on the cheek and said:

"Thankful I wore my watch! If the thieves had taken that with your picture in it, I'd have mourned, I tell you!"

And Mrs. Dunbar actually flushed and murmured: "You foolish man!" and then her hard nature softened still more as the jovial family kept on smiling, despite the loss of the money.

The very next week Mary left a hot fire going while she ran over to a neighbors. It was to return to find the house in flames. It burned to the ground.

Again her fault! But John only smiled, saying pleasantly:

"Suppose you'd been in the house! I tell you, we're lucky people. You deserve a new house with more conveniences in it, and you're going to have it!"

And the day this splendid new edifice was completed, and the smiling faces of the whole family beamed on